

WENATCHEE PLANNING COMMISSION
SCHEDULED MEETING
June 12, 2024
WENATCHEE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
301 Yakima Street
Wenatchee, WA 98801
5:30 PM

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

II. ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS

A. Approval of the minutes from the last regular meeting on May 15, 2024

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Comments for any matters not included on the agenda

IV. OLD BUSINESS

None

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Workshop: Middle Housing Draft Code Amendments

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Wenatchee City Hall is open for the public to attend meetings in person. The public may also participate in the meeting via phone by calling: (509) 888-3298, passcode 16995#. If you have questions about participating in the meeting, please contact Stephen Neuenschwander, Planning Manager at sneuenschwander@wenatcheewa.gov or (509) 888-3285.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Mayor's office at (509) 888-6204 (TTY 711). Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title 1.)

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rani Sampson called the meeting to order at 5:30p.m., with the following members in attendance: Ruby Gaston, Amber Bollinger, Anupama Vembar, Josh Jorgensen, and Susan Albert. Joe Gamboni was absent.

City Planning staff was represented by: Stephen Neuenschwander, Assistant Director; Matt Parsons, Senior Planner; Mia Bretz, Associate Planner; and Eva Osburn, Administrative Assistant.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS

A. Approval of the minutes from the regular meetings on March 20, 2024.

Commissioner Susan Albert moved to approve the minutes from the March 20 regular meeting. Commissioner Ruby Gaston seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no public comment.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

None

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Workshop: Middle Housing Requirements from HB1110

Stephen Neuenschwander, Assistant Director; Matt Parsons, Senior Planner and Mia Bretz, Associate Planner, presented.

VI. OTHER

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Chair Rani Sampson adjourned the meeting at 6:55p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
CITY OF WENATCHEE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Eva Osburn, Administrative Assistant



**City of
Wenatchee**

Community Development Department

City Hall

301 Yakima Street, Suite 100

Wenatchee, WA 98801

(509) 888-3200

Fax (509) 888-3201

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Community Development Staff

SUBJECT: Review first draft of Middle Housing code update

DATE: June 5, 2024

ATTACHMENTS:

- Draft Middle Housing (4 or less units) code

Intro

Planning Commission meetings this year have focused on legislative changes regarding housing. In January, a brief overview of the HB1110 was provided along with several other bills. In February, staff presented details on middle housing and accessory dwelling unit legislative changes, and discussed how the city may respond to these state mandates. In March, staff provided an overview and history of middle housing in the city. In May, staff reviewed key topics related to middle housing, such as landscaping, open space and height.

At the June meeting, staff will present a first draft of a new concept for organizing development standards around housing, inspired both by HB1110's requirements, as well as our experience implementing our 2019 housing code standards.

Middle Housing in Wenatchee

As we have discussed over the last few months, Wenatchee was founded with middle housing types, developed through the early 1900s. Then a long period of strict development regulations, promoting mostly single-family unit development, took over and drastically restricted housing development. In 2019 Wenatchee took a big step to provide additional opportunities for increased density and diverse housing types in existing residential districts. The housing toolbox expanded and Wenatchee's code now allows 9 housing types: accessory dwelling units (ADU); single-family dwellings; cottages; duplexes; courtyard housing; townhouses; multifamily; live-work dwellings; and mixed use. Since HB1110 requires cities to adopt diverse housing types, we are ahead of the curve!

Though the 2019 housing code update has led to the development of more housing, at the May Planning Commission meeting we reviewed some of the unforeseen challenges that have arisen. For example, open space, access standards, and architectural design requirements are inconsistent across different housing types. The complexity of the housing type-specific regulations has, at times, limited the impact of the standards intended to provide compatibility with existing residential development. For example, we discussed how landscaping standards can be a burden to small projects, while not providing the intended community protections; open space is calculated differently for almost each housing type; it can be unclear how to apply these type-specific regulations for in-fill developments, or

projects with a mix of housing types. Several housing types, like cottage and courtyard, have not been utilized due to these challenges.

Through our discussions on middle housing this year, we have identified some key aspects that are important to Wenatchee in how housing development is regulated. With the main goal of shifting decades of restrictive housing regulations to increase supply and, more significantly, the diversity of our housing supply, simplicity in residential development regulation is paramount. As we took a virtual tour of some of our first neighborhoods in Wenatchee, we saw how a wide variety of housing types and densities could be compatibly achieved with elements like entryways with porches, shrubs or trees in the front, and similar heights and roof pitches. Focusing both on simplifying our code, while honing in on the street experience is a critical next step for housing regulations in Wenatchee.

The legislature's goals of addressing housing issues, comes at a good time for Wenatchee as we are ready for refining our housing regulations. Staff has reviewed several scenarios to both meet Wenatchee goals and WA State law and is presenting a preferred recommendation. The following is a review of the requirements of HB1110 and the staff preferred recommendation for a housing code update.

HB 1110 Summary

ESSHB1110, passed in the 2023 legislative session, was one of a series of bills focused on addressing the state's housing crisis. With a population of at least 25,000 but less than 75,000, the City of Wenatchee is required to comply with the following.

For all lots in predominantly residential zones greater than 1,000 square feet:

1. Allow at least 2 units/lot
2. Allow at least 4 units/lot, when 1 affordable unit is provided
3. Allow at least 6 middle housing types (single-family, courtyard, cottage, duplex, townhouse, multifamily)
4. Require a maximum of 1 parking space/unit for lots less than 6,000sf and 2 spaces/unit on lots greater than 6,000sf
5. Development standards cannot be more restrictive than SFR (setbacks, height, lot coverage)

For an in depth look at the state law and how it may apply to the City, refer back to Exhibit A in the May memo.

Middle Housing – 4 units or less per lot

Staff is presenting our preferred alternative update to our housing code to achieve consistency, simplicity and consolidation of the various housing standards. Instead of different standards for each housing type, we would like to consider the same standards for all small developments, regardless of which housing type, and the same standards for all larger developments, regardless of which housing type. If a project intends on adding 1 unit to an existing home, a duplex behind, or a whole new four-plex, detached, attached, stacked, row, or otherwise combined should be consistent in how the review occurs.

The draft Middle Housing Code attachment presents a new code section that could replace just the small developments – four units or less per lot:

- Single-family
- Duplex
- In-fill cottage
- Patio homes
- Townhouses and multifamily for 4 or less units

This approach meets all five criteria listed above in the HB 1110 Summary, as well as creates a unified and simplified approach to in-fill development. Where open space, landscaping and design standards varied greatly for these housing types, this code would streamline the standards, focusing on the experience from the street.

Importantly, the draft code addresses four main areas: architectural design, open space, landscaping and parking.

1. Architectural design focuses on the street experience, only requiring design elements for the street façade. An entry and porch along with a percentage of windows and doors is a standard commonly met by most single-family designs, but also encourages a compatible façade for larger buildings. One articulation element would be required for buildings with a third story and a larger width. Garage width standards allow for the bottom floor to be entirely a garage, while still requiring some de-emphasis of the garage in proportion to the rest of the façade.
2. Open space is modified to be consistent across all housing types and more equitable based on the unit sizing, rather than the lot sizing. It is also given more flexibility from the single-family standard in not having to be contiguous, and allowed in the front.
3. Landscaping is not required, but street trees, where required by Public Works will be implemented for all housing types and a small percentage of the front yard will be vegetated.
4. Parking lots in front yards are prohibited through the requirement to park all vehicles to the side or behind buildings, or in designated driveways.
5. Multiple single-family homes can be built on one lot without providing evidence of a future subdivision.

Including single-family residences in this code was not a simple decision. In recent years it has become common to see in-fill behind or in combination with single-family homes. Detached, single units are an integral option for Middle Housing projects that complicates how single-family standards look in application. Below is a comparison of the changes to the single-family code to consider the impacts. Further examples and discussion will be presented at the meeting.

Development Standard	Existing Single-Family Code	Proposed Middle Housing Code
<i>Entry</i>	No requirement	Visible from the street
<i>Weather Protection</i>	4' x 4'	4' x 3'

<i>Walkway</i>	From the entry to the street	From the entry to the street
<i>Façade Design</i>	Garage width no more than 50% of street facing façade width, 65% allowed if certain criteria are met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garage area no more than 50% of street facing façade area, 65% allowed if certain criteria are met 15% Windows & doors Articulation required for buildings over 26' high and at least 30' wide
<i>Open Space</i>	10% of lot area Contiguous 15'x15' minimum dimensions	100sf or 10% of floor area 10'x10' minimum dimensions
<i>Multiple on one lot</i>	Show subdivision standards	Limited to density
<i>Landscaping</i>	None	Street trees 10% front yard vegetation No formal landscape plan required, just marked on site plan and later inspected.
<i>Parking</i>	2 spaces In designated driveways	1 space for lots ≤6,000sf 2 spaces for lots >6,000sf In designated driveways or to the rear or side of buildings

Next Steps

Over the following months, staff will continue to bring code changes to align with the direction we set out at the June meeting. The following is a list of topics we expect to address:

- Modifications and cleanup of definitions of unit types and how they fit in the District Use Chart
- Residential Units (five or more) code section draft
- ADU integration with middle housing codes
- In collaboration with Public Works, a draft code to update consistency on access and driveways
- Off-street parking code update to comply with lots less than 6,000sf
- Exemptions to density requirements in critical areas and their buffers.
- Height and building bulk will be addressed in the context of the Comprehensive Plan update, as it is related to density and zoning.
- The Housing Study will present findings that encourage increasing density in specific areas of the City. This topic will be addressed in the context of the Comprehensive Plan update.

Timeline for Compliance

Under the state statute the city must adopt compliant regulations by December 31, 2026 or the statewide [model ordinance](#) developed by the Washington State Department of Commerce will govern

as described in [RCW36.70A.636](#)(2). However, the City has been awarded a grant for this work and under that program we have agreed to adopt compliant provisions by the end of 2024. Early adoption of housing standards to comply with the legislative updates will assist the city in meeting the housing demand by providing a simplified development code for middle housing types.

- The Planning Commission will review draft code amendments in June, July and August.
- A public comment draft would be released in September or early October.
- A public hearing with the Planning Commission would be scheduled for the November meeting.
- A public hearing with the City Council would be scheduled for early December.
- The effective date of the ordinance, if adopted, would most likely be in mid-January 2025.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us:

- Mia Bretz, Associate Planner (509) 888-3250 MBretz@WenatcheeWA.Gov
- Matt Parsons AICP, Senior Planner (509) 888-3253 mparsons@wenatcheewa.gov
- Stephen Neuenschwander, Assistant Director (509) 888-3285
SNeuenschwander@WenatcheeWA.Gov

Middle Housing Code

DRAFT

10.46.020 Residential district development chart.

Standard	RS	RL	RM	RH	RF	Conditions/ Exceptions/ Reference
Maximum Density	6 dwelling units per acre(x)	8 dwelling units per acre(x)	20 dwelling units per acre(x)	40 dwelling units per acre(x)	4 dwelling units per acre(x)	WCC 10.46.110 (x) two dwelling units per lot is allowed

10.46.110 Density calculations and exceptions.

(1) Calculations for Determining Maximum Density, Where Expressed in Dwelling Units per Acre. The entire gross site area may be used in the calculation of the maximum allowed residential density including half of the adjacent city or county right-of-way (to the centerline).

(2) How to Calculate Density. Maximum density for an individual site shall be calculated by multiplying the site area (in acres) by the maximum dwelling units/acre in the applicable zone. When calculation results in a fraction, the fraction shall be rounded to the nearest whole number as follows:

- (a) Fractions of 0.50 and above are rounded up.
- (b) Fractions below 0.50 are rounded down.

(3) Exceptions to Density Standards. Exceptions to established density standards shall be granted in the following instances:

- (a) When an exception is granted for a particular use described in Chapter 10.47 WCC.
- (b) Additional density may be granted for affordable housing pursuant to RCW 35A.63.300 when local needs can be demonstrated compliant with the comprehensive plan.
- (c) Up to four units per lot are allowed for lots 1,000 square feet or more in RS, RL, RM and RH when they are within one-quarter mile walking distance of a major transit stop or the following standards are met.

(A) The applicant must commit to renting or selling the required number of units as affordable housing. Dwelling units that qualify as affordable housing shall have costs, including utilities other than telephone, that do not exceed 30 percent of the monthly income of a household whose income does not exceed the following percentages of median household income adjusted for household size, for the county where the

household is located, as reported by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development:

1. Rental housing: 60 percent.
2. Owner-occupied housing: 80 percent.

(B) The units shall be maintained as affordable for a term of at least 50 years, and the property shall satisfy that commitment and all required affordability and income eligibility conditions. The applicant shall record a covenant or deed restriction that ensures the continuing rental or ownership of units subject to these affordability requirements consistent with the conditions in chapter 84.14 RCW for a period of no less than 50 years.

(C) The covenant or deed restriction shall address criteria and policies to maintain public benefit if the property is converted to a use other than that which continues to provide for permanently affordable housing.

(D) The units dedicated as affordable housing shall:

1. Be provided in a range of sizes comparable to other units in the development.
2. The number of bedrooms in affordable units shall be in the same proportion as the number of bedrooms in units within the entire development.
3. Generally, be distributed throughout the development and have substantially the same functionality as the other units in the development

10.47.??? Residential Dwelling Units (four or less) [new section]

Dwelling units defined herein and where allowed by Chapter 10.10 WCC, District Use Chart, shall meet the following standards unless otherwise regulated within this code:

(1) Purpose

- (a) To enhance the character of the street and neighborhood and maintain “eyes on the street” for safety to pedestrians and to create a more welcoming and interesting streetscape.
- (b) To enhance the streetscape and promote neighborhood interaction and safety through design.
- (c) To deemphasize garages and driveways as major visual elements along the street.
- (d) To provide usable open space for residents.
- (e) To provide housing types that are responsive to changing household demographics (e.g., retirees, small families, young professionals), provide opportunities for more affordable housing within single-family neighborhoods, and provide opportunities for infill development consistent with goals of the Wenatchee urban area comprehensive plan.
- (f) To ensure compatibility with neighboring uses.

(2) Standards

(a) **Applicability.** The standards of this section shall apply to the development of up to four dwelling units on one parcel, including new buildings, building conversions, additions or modifications.

(b) **Form.** Dwelling units may be detached, attached, stacked, row, or otherwise combined. Allowable unit types include single-family, duplex, cottage, courtyard, multifamily, and townhouse.

(c) Design

(i) **Walkways.** Clear and obvious pedestrian access between the sidewalk (or the street if there is no sidewalk) and the building entry is required for new dwellings. The driveway may be used for pedestrian access.

(ii) **Weather Protection.** All new dwellings shall provide a covered pedestrian entry.

(A) For entries serving a single dwelling and facing the street and not separated from the street by a dwelling or located more than 100 feet from a street, a minimum weather protection of four feet wide by three feet deep shall be provided.

(B) For all other entries serving a single dwelling, a weather protection at least two feet deep shall be provided.

(C) For all primary building entries that serve more than one residence, a minimum weather protection of at least six feet wide and five feet deep shall be provided.

(iii) All facades that are visible from the street and that are not separated from the street by a dwelling or located more than 100 feet from a street must have the following elements:

(A) **Entry.** A primary entrance that is visible from the street shall be provided.

(B) **Windows and doors.** A minimum of 15 percent of the area of the street-facing façade elevation shall include windows or doors. Attached garages do not count toward the façade area when they have windows. Facades separated from the street by a dwelling or located more than 100 feet from a street are exempt from this standard.

(C) **Articulation.** Buildings over 26 feet high shall apply at least one articulation method every 30 feet for facades facing the street and not separated from the street by a dwelling or located more than 100 feet from a street.

1. Roofline change or a roof dormer with a minimum of four feet in width.

2. Balcony(ies) a minimum of 50 square feet and accessible from an interior room(s).

3. An offset of the façade of a minimum of two feet in depth.

4. A roofed porch at least 50 square feet in size.

(iv) Garage Width. Garage doors (attached or detached) may occupy no more than 50 percent of the width façade of the ground-level facade facing the street. Garage doors may exceed this limit up to a maximum of 65 percent of the width of the ground-level facade facing the street provided at least two of the following design details are utilized:

(A) A decorative trellis over at least the entire width of the garage door(s).

(B) A window or windows are placed above the garage on a second story or attic wall.

(C) A balcony that extends out over the garage and includes decorative support columns.

(D) Utilizing all single vehicle car doors as an alternative to wider garage doors suitable for two-car garages.

(E) Windows on the garage door.

(F) Decorative details on the garage door. Standard squares on a garage door will not qualify as a decorative detail.

(d) Open Space.

(i) All new dwelling units shall provide an open space area of 100 square feet per dwelling unit or 10 percent of residential unit floor with a minimum dimension of 10 feet on all sides.

(ii) Open space must be directly accessible for each unit either in common or private areas. Common open space shall be located in a separate tract or tracts and owned in common by all property owners.

(iii) Drive aisles and parking areas shall not count in the calculations for usable open space.

(iv) Additions shall not create or increase any nonconformity with this standard.

(e) Landscaping.

(i) All new dwelling units shall adhere to the Street Trees section of the Landscaping Chapter 10.62.100(6) WCC.

(ii) The area of the width of the parcel between the right of way and the front of the building shall have at least 10 percent covered in vegetation. Vegetation may be in the form of either ground cover, shrubs and/or trees.

(f) Parking. Parking shall be located to the side or rear of buildings unless in a designated driveway. All other parking standards are in WCC 10.60.